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Source: *The Journal of Race Development*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Apr., 1917), pp. 448-466

Published by:

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29738214>

Accessed: 01-08-2014 01:27 UTC

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## ARMENIA, HER CULTURE AND ASPIRATIONS

*By Arshag Mahdesian, Editor of "The New Armenia"*

### I

A village parson, upon being asked, "What is an octogenarian?" answered meditatively: "I don't know what they are, but they must be awfully sickly; you never hear of 'em but they are dying." A similar thought is probably awakened in the mind of the average American concerning the Armenians, of whom one seldom hears unless they are massacred by the Turks. There are even prominent American journalists, clergymen, professors, and statesmen who still either regard the Armenians as "Christianized Turks," or confuse them with Arminians—the followers of the Dutch theologian Arminius. Yet, the Armenians, as the protagonists of western ideals, and as the first nation to embrace Christianity, have rendered remarkable services to civilization.

The Armenians belong to the Indo-European family of mankind. They have been depicted by impartial observers as intellectually, morally, and physically superior to most of the races surrounding them, or as "the Anglo-Saxons of the Orient."

Dr. Andrew D. White, President Emeritus of Cornell University, and late Ambassador to Germany, says:

The Armenians are a people of large and noble capacities. For ages they have maintained their civilization under oppression that would have crushed almost any other people. The Armenian is one of the finest races in the world. If I were asked to name the most desirable races to be added by immigration to the American population, I would name among the very first the Armenian.

Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, the founder of Robert College, Constantinople, lauds the Armenians as "a noble race;" and Dr. A. E. Winship, editor of the *Journal of Education*,

declares that, in the fibre of the Armenian character are the germs of industry, genius and thrift."

"It would be difficult," thinks Lord Byron "to find in the annals of a nation less crime than in those of the Armenians, whose virtues are those of peace and whose vices are the result of the oppression they have undergone."

Lamartine calls the Armenians "The Swiss of the East." Viscount Bryce writes concerning the Armenians:

Among all those who dwell in western Asia they stand first, with a capacity for intellectual and moral progress, as well as with a natural tenacity of will and purpose beyond that of all their neighbors—not merely of Turks, Tartars, Kurds, and Persians, but also of Russians. They are a strong race, not only with vigorous nerves and sinews, physically active and energetic, but also of conspicuous brain power.

Lord Cromer, speaking of different nationalities in modern Egypt, vouches that

The Armenians, more than any other people, have attained the highest administrative ranks and have at times exercised a decisive influence on the conduct of public affairs in Egypt.

Lord Carnarvon asserts that "The Armenians in intellectual power are equal to the Greeks;" and H. F. B. Lynch considers them "peculiarly adapted to be the intermediaries" between Europe and Asia. He adds:

If I were asked what characteristics distinguish the Armenians from other Orientals, I should be disposed to lay most stress on a quality known in popular speech as *grit*. It is this quality to which they owe their preservation as a people, and they are not surpassed in this respect by any European nation. Their intellectual capacities are supported by a solid foundation of character, and, unlike the Greeks, but like the Germans, their nature is averse to superficial methods; they become absorbed in their tasks and plumb them deep.

Herr Haupt, a German scholar, in his book entitled, "*Armenia's Past and Present*," writes:

The more we fathom their distant past, the more we begin to realize the constructive and enlightening rôle played by the Armenians in the world history of civilization.

Professor K. Roth says in "*Armenien und Deutschland*:"

The importance of the Armenian people is often ignored. The Armenians have played in antiquity, and more especially in the Middle Ages, an important rôle. As a factor of civilization in the Orient, the Armenian is more important than is generally realized. The Armenians are, without doubt, intellectually the most awake amongst all the people that inhabit the Ottoman Empire. They are superior to Turks and Kurds.

## II

According to Movses Khorenatzi, the great epic historian of the Armenians, the first chieftain of Armenia was Haik, "the robust hero of noble stature, with wavy hair, sparkling eyes, brave and renowned amongst the giants," who vanquished the Tyrant Belus of Babylonia and occupied a vast territory extending from the Caspian to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and from Pontus to the boundaries of Assyria. The appellations of Haik, *Hais*; Haiasdan, the country of Hai; and Haieren, the language of Hai, used by the Armenians to designate themselves, their land, and their language, may have inspired Khorenatzi to create an eponymous hero,—Haik.

The Armenian plateau is described in the Annals of Assyria as the land of Nairi, whose cantons coalesced in the ninth century B. C. into the powerful Kingdom of Urartu. The Biblical references to the Kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz, ostensibly relate to Armenia. It was to Armenia that the sons of Sennacherib fled after slaying their father.

It is claimed, however, that the inhabitants of the kingdom about Lake Van, known to the ancient Hebrews as Ararat, and to the Assyrians as Urartu, were Hittites. The Armenians, an Aryan people, invaded Ararat and the adjoining country and assimilated the original inhabitants. Luschan maintains that the Armenians are the descendants, very little modified, of the Chaldeans.

The word Armina (old Persian *Armaniya*, Persian *Armenia*), first appears in the famous inscription of Behistoun, 518 B. C., and was thought to have been derived from Aram, the seventh and the most illustrious king of the Haik dynasty. Historical researches of later date, however, represent Armenia as *Ar*, land; *Meni*, mountain,—the

*land of mountains.* This etymological solution, also, may prove conjectural. But whatever the meaning of Armenia the land is unquestionably mountainous, with a mineral wealth of gold, silver, copper, iron, lead, marble, saltpetre, quicksilver and sulphur.

Above the huge tableland of Armenia, varying in elevation from 6,000 to 7,000 feet, rise massive and steep ranges of the Taurus and Anti-Taurus mountains, culminating in the famous Mount Ararat, 17,000 feet high, famed as the resting place of Noah's Ark. Between these ranges lie deep gorges and valleys, interspersed with areas of pasture lands. This extensive plateau is watered by the Choruk, the Euphrates, the Kur and the Aras rivers. There are extensive lakes. Lake Van, 5,100 feet above sea level, with an area of approximately 1,300 square miles, six times as large as the Lake of Geneva, is the most important inland water. On the plateaus where low temperatures prevail there are but steppes. In the valleys, where the temperature rises very high, grow plane-trees, poplars, peach, mulberry, rice, melons, olives, figs, grapes, tobacco and cotton.

Armenia, at the period of her greatest territorial extent, was included between the parallels of 37° 30' to 41° 45' north latitude and the meridians of 37° to 49° east longitude, and comprised 500,000 square miles, embracing the north-east corner of Asiatic Turkey, viz., Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekr, Harpoot, Sivas, and Cilicia; Transcaucasia, viz., Erivan, Elizabetspol, and the territory of Kars; and the north-west corner of Persia, viz., the province of Azerbaijan, with a population of about 30,000,000. This was under the reign of Tigranes II.

### III

Alexander Polyhistor, a Greek writer, 175 B. C., affirms that the Armenians lived twenty centuries before Christ, and in an expedition against that powerful maritime people the Phoenicians, conquered them, and captured many prisoners, among whom was the nephew of Abraham; and an Irish publicist claims that at the time of Phoenician

commerce with the West, Armenian traders were among them,—that every Irish name one meets ending in *an*, such as Brian, O'Callaghan, Sheridan, as well as the Cornish names of Trevelyan, Tressilian, and others, are but the remains of the Armenian termination *ian*.

The Armenian King Hurachia is alleged to have assisted Nebuchadnezzar in the capture of Jerusalem, 600 B. C., and King Tigranes I is said to have allied with Cyrus in the overthrow of Babylon (538). And it was Zarmair who took part in the Homeric conflicts against Troy.

The Armenians, however, attained the zenith of their military glory under the reign of Tigranes II, surnamed the Great, 94–56 B. C., who by successful military efforts extended his power in all directions. He founded a new Royal City, Tigranocerta, modeling it on Nineveh and Babylon. “Tigranes made the Republic of Rome tremble before his prowess,” writes Cicero; and, according to Plutarch, Lucullus said:

It is but a few days' journey from the country of the Gabiri or Sebastia into Armenia, where Tigranes, King of Kings, is seated upon his throne, surrounded with the power that wrested Asia from the Parthians; that carried Grecian colonies into Media, and subdued Syria and Palestine.

Rome could not brook Tigranes, and finally overthrew him. In deference to his valor, however, Tigranes, under the tutelage of Rome, was permitted to remain on the Armenian throne.

In later years Armenia was overtrodden by Persians, Romans and Greeks. After the fall of the Bagratid dynasty the Armenian nobles took refuge in the inaccessible fastnesses of the Taurus Mountains (Cilicia). Here, in 1080, Reuben founded the Kingdom of Armenia Minor, that might have fared more fortunately had not her government and people spontaneously and generously championed the Crusaders. Pope Gregory XIII writes in his Bull, *Ecclesia Romana* of the year 1384:

Among the other merits of the Armenian nation to the Church and to the Christian Republic, this in particular is eminent and

deserves special remembrance—that when the princes and the armies of Christendom were on their way to the Holy Land, no nation and no people more promptly and more zealously than the Armenians rendered its aid in men, in horse, in arms, in food, in counsel; in a word, with all their strength, with the greatest fervor and fidelity, the Armenians assisted the Christians in these Holy Wars.

But when the Crusades failed, and the Mohammedan fury burst over Armenia Minor, Europe remained indifferent. Sis, the Capital of Armenia Minor, was captured in 1375, and the independence of Armenia came to an end. Her last King, Leo VI, visited the courts of England and France trying in vain to establish an *entente cordiale* between them, with a view to enlisting their help for the re-establishment of the Armenian State. He died in 1393, and was buried in the Cathedral of St. Denis, Paris.

#### IV

The Armenians embraced Christianity very early. Tertullian maintains that “the people of the name of Christ” were found in Armenia before the middle of the Third Century; and Eusebius mentions there the existence of “brethren.” If the Greek Church claims Orthodoxy; the Roman, Catholicity; the Armenian Church is entitled to Apostolicity, as the Apostles Thaddeus, Bartholomew, and Jude preached Christianity and suffered martyrdom in Armenia. Through the efforts of Gregory the *Illuminator*, Christianity was made, by the royal edict of King Tiridates, the national religion of Armenia, in 301. The Emperor Constantine merely followed the example of the Armenian king when, in 313, he proclaimed Christianity as the State religion of Byzantium.

How deeply the Armenian soul had become imbued with Christianity can be attested by the subsequent national martyrology. When, in the middle of the fifth century, the Persians essayed, first by promises and then by force, to have the Armenians embrace fire-worship, they entirely failed. The Armenians retorted:

From this faith, no force can move us,—neither angels nor men; neither sword, nor fire, nor water, nor any deadly punishment. . . . If you leave us our faith, we shall accept no other lord in place of you; but we shall accept no God in place of Christ. If after this great confession, you ask anything more of us, lo! our lives are in your power. From you, torments; from us, submission; your sword, our necks. We are no better than those who have gone before us, who sacrificed their wealth and their lives for this testimony!

In the memorable Battle of Avarair, May 26, 451, known as the Armenian Marathon, 66,000 Armenians confronted 220,000 Persians. Their leader, Vartan Mamigonian, perished like a Judas Maccabæus. But “The Angel of Martyrdom is brother to the Angel of Victory;” a Persian general was so impressed by the tenacious resistance of the Armenians, that he exclaimed: “These people have put on Christianity not like a garment, but like their flesh and blood. Men who do not dread fetters nor fear torments, nor care for their property, and who above all choose death rather than life—who can stand against them?” And the Chief of the Magi, accompanying the general, reported to the Persian King: “Even if the immortals aid us, it will be impossible to establish Mazdaism in Armenia.”

Since the days of Avarair, whenever the alternative offered the Armenians has been apostacy or the sword, they have always thundered as did a young Armenian nobleman in the presence of the Mohammedan ruler Yusouf: “We are Christians; we believe in God Who dwells in the midst of Light illimitable.”

During the recent Turkish atrocities, many thousands of Armenians who were immolated for their Christian faith could have easily saved themselves by merely pronouncing the formula of Islam and abjuring Christ. They preferred, instead, to suffer fiendish indignities at the hands of the blood-besotted and vice-crazed Turks and to die like martyrs. Lord Bryce said:

Of the seven or eight hundred thousand Armenians who have perished in the recent massacres, many thousands have died as martyrs, by which I mean they have died for their Christian faith when they could have saved their lives by renouncing it.



This has perhaps not been realized even by those who in Europe or America have read of and been horrified by the wholesale slaughter and hideous cruelties by which half of an ancient nation has been exterminated. They can hardly understand how there should be religious persecution in our time.

The Armenian National Church has been distinguished for its spirit of tolerance. Sir Edwin Pears writes:

The Armenians, have been more open-minded than any other of the Christian races . . . in reference to matters of religion. The Greeks will not tolerate a Roman Catholic or a Protestant missionary. But while the Armenian is proud of his *millet* and does not look kindly on a man who changes his religion, he does not consider that it should prevent him inquiring into the truth of other forms of Christianity, or adopting them if he likes. In the sixteenth century the Armenian Church dignitaries corresponded with Erasmus and Melancthon and other reformers. . . .

With their passion for simplicity, the Armenians have preserved the real spirit of Christianity in their Church. J. S. Stuart-Glennis writes:

It was Armenian missionaries—the Paulician heretics—who sowed in Europe the seeds of its reformation. And in the sixteenth century, that order of the Jesuits called into existence by the success of the Reformation, sent missionaries to Armenia, and carried into the birthland of Protestantism the revenge of Catholicism.

The broad, democratic basis upon which the Armenian Church rests can be best understood by the method of electing the Supreme Primate, or Catholicos, of the Armenian Church, whose seat has, since 309, been at Etchmiadzin, that, with its Supreme Synod, Theological Seminary, and Cathedral, corresponds to the Vatican.

Upon a vacancy of the Throne of the Catholicos, the Supreme Synod issues invitations to all Armenian dioceses, whether in Russia, Turkey, Persia or elsewhere, calling upon them each to name two deputies, one clerical and one lay, who after the lapse of a year shall repair to Etchmiadzin and cast their votes. These deputies, should they be unable to attend in person, may signify their vote by letter. The ordinaries of the Armenian Church, also, are elected by diocesan councils, six-sevenths of whose members are laymen.

## V

On account of the fluctuating fortune of their temporal power, the Armenians regard their Church not merely a spiritual citadel, but the focus of national aspirations and learning. The Catholicos St. Sahak (353–439) essayed to revive a purely national literature. His difficulties were almost insuperable, as the Armenians lacked an alphabet of their own. But his friend and collaborator, Bishop Mesrop, after long and painstaking labors, succeeded in devising an alphabet (404). It consists of thirty-six characters, “A Waterloo of Alphabet” in the poetic diction of Lord Byron, who studied Armenian at the famous Armenian Mekhitarist Convent, St. Lazare, Venice (1816–1818), and recommended it as “a rich language” that “would amply repay any one the trouble of learning it.

The Armenian belongs to the Indo-European group of languages. Many Armenian words are from the same root as the English, *viz.*, eye, *ag*; foot, *vod*; mother, *mair*; daughter, *dooster*; thou, *too*; ass, *esh*; door, *toor*; hair, *heir*; son, *san*; sore, *zor*; un-, *an-*; and -tion, *-toun*, etc.

Hubschmann, Meillet, Villefroi and St. Martin have made valuable studies of the Armenian language, which has been described as “a plastic and noble language, capable of rendering faithfully, yet not servilely, the Greek Bible and Greek Fathers.”

The immediate result of St. Sahak’s and Bishop Mesrop’s activities was an intellectual and literary revival, known as the “Golden Age of Armenian Literature.” During this period many books of didactic, religious and historical character were written, and translations made from the Greek. The first book they undertook to translate was the Bible, from the Greek Septuagint. It was completed in 433, so successfully and faithfully as to be called by La Croze “The Queen of Versions.” Other translations were as excellent. It is claimed that were the *Anabasis* of Xenophon lost, it could be reproduced from the Armenian version. The *Chronicles* of Eusebius, the *Homilies* of St. John Chrysostom, and two works of Philo on *Providence*, survive only in Armenian.

Although there are fragments of Armenian pagan songs preserved in the historical works of Movses Khorenatzi, the Armenian literature really begins from this period, under the dominant power of the Church. It was not until the twelfth century that the poetic spirit of the Armenians burst the ecclesiastical bonds imposed upon it. The secularization of the Armenian literature received a fresh impetus when, in 1488, about fifty years after the invention of printing by Gutenberg, Armenian emigrants, established in Venice and Amsterdam, constructed Armenian characters and began to publish the manuscripts of their great authors, and translations from the classics. Sir Henry Norman considers the ancient, mediæval and modern Armenian literature comparable with the literature of any other nation. Robert Arnot writes:

As a people the Armenians can not boast of as vast a literature as the Persians, their one-time conquerors, but that which remains of purely Armenian prose, folk-lore, and poetry tells us of a poetic race, gifted with imaginative fire, sternness of will, and persistency of adherence to old ideas, a race that in proportion to their limited production in letters can challenge comparison with any people.

Being exposed to the incessant invasions and depredations of hostile races, the Armenians never enjoyed that leisure and tranquillity of mind which are necessary for the highest artistic development. Yet, Sir Edwin Pears writes:

I believe the Armenian to be the most artistic in Turkey. Many paint well, and some have made reputations in Russia and France. Amateur painting is so general as to suggest that the race has a natural taste for Art. The picture gallery on the Island of Lazzaro at Venice contains many works of art by Armenians which won the approval of Ruskin.

H. F. B. Lynch, who visited the imposing ruins of Ani, the capital of the Bagratid Dynasty, and studied its monuments, asserts that the Armenians were the originators of the Gothic style of architecture. One of the most perfect specimens of Byzantine architecture, built in 1517–1526, at Curtea de Argesch, Rumania, was according to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the work of an Armenian. It was an

Armenian architect, Sinan, who designed and built the famous Mosque of Adrianople, and the Mosque of Suleyman in Constantinople; and Armenian architects, the Baliani, constructed the Palaces of Cheragan, of Beyler-bey, and of Dolma Bahché, "which might be taken," writes Theophile Gautier, "for a Venetian Palace—only richer, vaster, and more highly embellished—transported from the Grand Canal to the Banks of the Bosphorus."

## VI

Though on account of her geographical position Armenia was exposed to constant invasions, not only did she maintain her civilization and culture, but she also furnished many illustrious leaders to foreign lands.

Dadarshis, the intrepid general whom Darius Hystaspis chose to support the Achæmenidæ Dynasty, was an Armenian. So was Nerses, the valiant and the renowned, the favorite of Theodora, who rendered the armies of Justinian invincible. It was to an Armenian, Proeresios,—the teacher of St. Gregory Nazianzen, of St. Basil, and of Julian the Apostate, that Rome erected a statue with this inscription: "*Regina rerum Roma, Regi eloquentiæ.*"

Isaac, the Armenian Exarch of Ravenna, held the destiny of Italy in his hands (625–643). Herr Gelzer, an authority on Byzantine History, asserts that the period of the Armenian Emperors was the most glorious in the history of Byzantium. Armenian Emperors—Maurice, Phillippicus-Bardanes, Leo V, Basil I, the founder of the Macedonian Dynasty, John Zimisces, and Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus—made Byzantium a flourishing center of civilization. Basil II, the Conqueror of Bulgaria, ended the menace of a Russian invasion, strengthened Italy against the pretensions of the German Emperor Otto II, and made of the Venetians a sure ally against the Saracens. The Armenian Empress Theodora (1042–1056) reigned with such wisdom and ensured to Byzantium such peace and prosperity, that her reign was called the *Golden Era of Augusta*.

In 1410 all the Armenian nobility fought with the armies

of Ladislaus Jagiello and contributed to the victory in the battle of Grunwaldt. "Had not," according to Polish assertions, "the hydra-head out of which was later to spring the Prussian kingdom been crushed" in this memorable battle, "the German deluge would have effaced Poland then, as it has submerged and obliterated the western Slavs on the banks of the Elbe, the Spree and the Oder. Without Grunwaldt there would have been no Poland!"

When the Turks, in 1683, besieged Vienna, the gate of Christian Europe, five thousand valiant Armenian warriors succored the army of King Sobieski, and turned the tide of battle by hurling the Moslem hordes back to the Danube.

It was the diplomacy of Israel Ori that enabled Russia to vanquish Persia. The victorious generals in the Russian army—Madatoff, Melikoff, Der Ghoukassoff, Lazareff, Baboutoff, Chelkonikoff and Alkahazoff were all Armenians. The correspondent of the London *Times* writes:

The way in which General Der Ghoukassoff conducted his men at Taghir on the 16th of June, 1877, when with his eight divisions he completely annihilated Mohammed Pasha's twelve divisions; the stubborn resistance by which, at Utch Kilisse, he stopped the advance of Moukhtar Pasha; the heroic retreat which he effected against the twenty-three divisions of Ahmet Pasha; his remarkable subsequent dashing assault on Bayazid, the defeat of the Turkish army, which was twice as strong as his own, and the relieving of the besieged place,—are such splendid feats of arms that they prove him to be a general of the highest rank.

General Melikoff was not merely a soldier, but a great administrative reformer. He drew for Russia a constitution, that Alexander II, had he not been assassinated, would have promulgated on March 1, 1881.

Nubar Pasha, the deliverer and regenerator of Egypt, and twice its Prime Minister; Prince Malcolm Khan, one of the earliest apostles of the Persian reform movement; and Eprem Khan, the hero and the martyr of the Persian revolution, whom the British Press hailed as the "Garibaldi of the East," were Armenians. Shall we mention the distinguished tragedian, Adamian, whom Russian criticism has proclaimed superior to Salvini and Rossi in the interpretation of *Hamlet*; the inimitable marine painter, Hovannes

Aivazovski; the mineralogist, Andreas Artzrouni, who enjoyed world-wide reputation; Hovannes Althen, who taught France the cultivation of *rubic tinctorum*, and whose statue stands now in the Duchy of Avignon; M. Manouelian, whose most valuable discoveries have placed him in the first rank of the histologists of our epoch; Edgar Shahin, the drypoint artist, one of the greatest, according to eminent French critics like Roger Marx and Gustave Geffroy; H. Mahokian, whose paintings have won many prizes in the Berlin Salon; Vittoria Aganoor Pompily, the lamented poetess of Italy; and M. Lucaz, the former Premier of Austria-Hungary?

The Armenians have not been less prominent in the United States: witness the late Governor Thomas Corwin, of Ohio, also at one time Secretary of the United States Treasury; the late Dr. Mihran K. Kassabian, the distinguished scientist of Philadelphia, and one of the foremost Roentgen rays investigators in the world; Dr. Menas Gregory, the eminent psychiatrist of Bellevue Hospital, New York; Mooshegh Vaygouny, a graduate of the University of California, who developed a synthetic method of converting grape sugar into tartaric acid; Mugurdich Garo, the famous photographer of Boston, unquestionably one of the greatest in America, who originated the *Garograph*; M. Mangasarian, of Chicago, the eloquent exponent of liberal thought in America; Haig Patigian, the distinguished San Francisco sculptor, who was awarded the prize for executing a monument to commemorate the rebuilding of San Francisco; and Dr. Seropian, the inventor of the green color of the American paper dollar. Even the first American soldier to land at Manila, in the Spanish-American war, was an Armenian, according to Nessib Behar, Managing Director of the National Liberal Immigration League.

## VII

In 1514 the Persians surrendered Armenia to the Turks. It may readily be surmised what the fate of the gifted and progressive Armenians would be under the dominion of a

people concerning whom the Pope, in 1456, had deemed the addition of the following invocation to the *Ave Maria* imperative: "Lord, save us from the devil, the Turk and the comet."

The Turks belong to the Turanian hordes of Central Asia. With their appearance civilization invariably vanished, in Syria, Mesopotamia, Byzantium, Arabia, Egypt, Armenia, and Greece. Victor Hugo admirably describes this blighting influence of the Turks as follows: "Les Turcs ont passé là, tout est ruine et deuil." "They (the Turks) were upon the whole," declares Gladstone, "from the black day when they first entered Europe, the one anti-human specimen of humanity. Wherever they went, a broad line of blood marked the track behind them; and as far as their dominion reached, civilization disappeared from view." The Turk has no consanguinity with the Arab, and hence no claim upon his civilization. He is heartily despised by the Arab, one of whose bards sings:

Three things naught but evil work—  
The locust, the vermin, and the Turk.

By their Christianity and by their genius, the Armenians have been the representatives of Western civilization in Turkey. While the Turks furnish the criminals, the Armenians furnish savants, physicians, artisans and merchants. The Armenian traders in Turkey were so successful that the *Financial News*, Manchester, England, wrote several years ago: "The commerce of the future belongs to the Scotch, the Germans and the Armenians."

It was through the collaboration of two great Armenian statesmen, Odian and Servicen, that Midhat Pasha succeeded in framing the Turkish Constitution, which was proclaimed by Abd-ul-Hamid on his accession to the throne, and then prorogued.

The first newspaper ever published in Turkey, sixty-seven years ago, was an Armenian periodical. The introduction of Turkish printing and the establishment of theaters were accomplished by Armenians—Muhandisian and Chouhadjian. Were it not for Armenian philologists, like



Gurdikians, the Turks would not even have a grammar of their own language.

For many years the chief directors of the Turkish arsenals and the Government Mint were Armenians—Dadian and Duzian. The fine stuffs, the embroideries, the tapestry and the jewelry admired in Europe and America as Turkish products are almost exclusively manufactured by Armenians.

The field of activities of French, American and later German missionaries, who went to Turkey for educational and evangelical purposes, was strictly confined to the Armenian communities.

General Sherif Pasha, a Turkish exile in Paris, told the truth when declaring, as reported in the columns of the *New York Times* of October 10, 1915, that

If there is a race which has been closely connected with the Turks by its fidelity, by its services to the country, by the statesmen and functionaries of talent it has furnished, by the intelligence which it has manifested in all domains—commerce, industry, science and the arts—it is certainly the Armenian.

Dr. P. Rohrbach, the German author, confirms the same fact. He writes: "We may say without exaggeration that not only in Armenia proper, but far beyond its boundaries, the economic life of Turkey rests, in great part, upon the Armenians." And Dr. V. Rosens, a great authority on Near Eastern affairs, says in *Tägliche Rundschau*:

The Armenians, industrious, sober, and zealous, occupied principally with agriculture, with raising cattle, and with manufacturing carpet . . . . can be considered the possessors of the highest civilization in Asia Minor. Thanks to their aptitude and their intelligence, the Armenians . . . . occupy the highest positions in Turkey.

The whole population of the Turkish Empire is estimated at 32,000,000, of whom only 2,380,000 were Armenians. Yet the Armenians had 785 educational institutions with more than 82,000 students, whereas the Turks could not boast of more than 150 schools, with only 17,000 pupils. In order to demonstrate the economic power of the Armenians in the Turkish Empire, Marcel Léart records the fact that of 166 importers in Sivas, which has the smallest



Armenian population of the six Armenian provinces, 141 are Armenians, 13 Turks, and 12 Greeks; of 150 exporters, 127 are Armenians and 23 Turks; of 37 bankers and capitalists, 32 are Armenians and only 5 Turks; of 9800 shopkeepers and artisans, 6800 are Armenians and only 2550 Turks, the rest being divided among various other nationalities. The same is true of native industry: of 153 factories and flour mills, 130 belong to Armenians, 20 to Turks, and 3, carpet concerns, to foreign or mixed companies. The directors of all these establishments are Armenian exclusively. The number of employees is about 17,000, of whom 14,000 are Armenians, 2800 Turks, 200 Greeks and others.

The Turk, being another version of Kriloff's snake that bites the glow-worm because it is shining, massacred the Armenians. "It is absurd," confided the Mayor of Smyrna to an English traveler, "that we can govern the Armenians—a people so much abler than we."

Because the Armenians are very brave, the Turkish authorities do not permit them the possession of arms. Dr. J. Lepsius writes in his book, entitled *Armenia and Europe*, that "Christians indeed, and Christians alone, are by statute forbidden to carry arms." As an example of Armenian valor, Viscount Bryce mentions the heroic resistance of the Zeitunlis, who proudly called themselves "The British of Asia Minor—unsubdued and unsubduable." Lord Bryce writes:

These Zeitunlis had only seven or eight thousand fighting men, but the strength of their position enabled them to repel all attacks; and, like the Montenegrins, to develop a thoroughly militant type of manhood. They are a rude, stern people, with no wealth and little education, and practising no art except that of iron-working—for there is plenty of iron in the mountains that wall them in. From 1800 till now they had forty times been in conflict with the Turks; in 1836 they successfully resisted the Egyptian invaders; and in 1859 and 1862 they repulsed vastly superior Turkish armies. In 1864, by European intervention, a sort of peace was arranged, and in 1878 a fort was erected, and the people were obliged to admit a Turkish garrison, which in 1895 was 600 strong. The Zeitunlis had laid in a stock of grain in anticipation of a general attack by Turks upon Christians, and had for some little while noticed that arms were being distributed by the Turkish officials among the Moslems. When

the massacres began in Northern Syria in November, 1895, they perceived that they would be the next victims, rose suddenly, and besieged the garrison. After three days the Turks, whose water supply had been cut off, surrendered. The Armenians, disarming them and arming themselves with the rifles which they found in the arsenal, had also weapons enough to supply some of the neighboring villages, and were able to take the field against the Turkish army which was advancing against them, and which is said to have been at times 60,000 strong. They repulsed the Turks, with great loss, in a series of hard-fought fights, and kept them at bay till February, 1896. Through the mediation of the British Ambassador at Constantinople, terms of peace were arranged in pursuance of which the siege was raised, and no fresh garrison placed in the town. The most perilous moment had been one when, the fighting men being all absent, the imprisoned Turkish soldiers had risen and sought to set fire to the town. The women, however, proved equal to the occasion. They fell upon the Turks and saved the town.

When, just prior to the deportations of 1915, Zeitun prepared to resist, the Ottoman authorities intimated to them, through the Armenian Catholicos of Cilicia, that, if they resisted, reprisals would be made upon their defenseless kinsmen in the plain. The elders of Zeitun, like the Armenian leaders throughout the empire, were determined to go almost any lengths in order to keep the peace. So the majority surrendered, and they were deported. Fifteen hundred fighting men are reported to have withdrawn to the loftier recesses of the mountains.

The chronic massacres with which, as Sir Edwin Pears has aptly remarked, the Turk has tried to maintain his supremacy ever since the capture of Constantinople, grew so appalling that Mr. E. Cantlow thus characterized the plight of the Armenians: "The very wrongs that made the French peasantry rise and in one deluge of blood sweep a corrupt aristocracy from their land are being enacted with tenfold horrors in Turkey today." Marshal von Moltke, who traveled extensively in Turkey and who was by no means a Turkophobe, asserted that security for Christians could never be had under the Turkish rulers.

Finally the constant appeals of the martyred Armenians to Christian Europe were answered by Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin, signed on July 13, 1878, that read:

The Sublime Porte undertakes to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds. It will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application.

Furious at the Armenian temerity in demanding reforms, the Turkish government increased its persecutions and encouraged the Kurds to slay and pillage their Armenian neighbors. From 1884 to 1896 more than three hundred thousand Armenians were massacred; then followed the Adana holocaust, with a total of sixty thousand Armenian victims. And when the Young Turks entered the war in the latter part of October, 1914, Talaat Bey and Enver Pasha plotted to "solve the Armenian Question by extirpating the whole nation"—hence the deportation of the Armenians, just after the failure of the Dardanelles expedition.

But no Talaat or Enver can annihilate the Armenians, who are endowed with a wonderful power of recuperation and resiliency, and who have always arisen phoenix-like, from calamities that might have proved fatal to any other nation. The Armenians have believed that whoever create in pursuit of enlightenment and ideals, that whoever endeavors to serve the immortal gods, may be subjected to the excruciating tortures of Prometheus or may endure the sorrows of Niobe, but shall never die.

Several years ago, Dr. James L. Barton, Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and formerly President of Euphrates College, Harpoot, Armenia, declared: "Give the Armenian capital and a righteous government and he will turn the whole of Turkey into a Garden of Eden in ten years."

In the past this people of remarkable potentialities has been offered fire and sword; it is entitled now to an opportunity for achievement—viz., to the enjoyment of the completest autonomy.

Before the recent Armenian calamity, there were 4,160,000 Armenians. The Turkish Empire contained 2,380,000

Russia, 1,500,000; the United States, 100,000; Persia, 64,000; Egypt, 40,000; India, 20,000; Austria-Hungary, 20,000; Bulgaria, 20,000; Rumania, 8000; Europe and Cyprus, 8000. Therefore, we shall have enough Armenians to populate the New Armenian State, that must include Van, Erzerum, Bitlis, Diarbekr, Sivas, Harpoot and Cilicia, with the Ararat enclave.

The Allies, who, according to the declaration of former Premier Asquith to Professor Masaryk, of London, England, are "fighting first and foremost for the liberties of small nations," must create an autonomous Armenian State. By this act of Righteousness and Justice the Allies will have performed their duty toward Humanity and Civilization, remembering the dictum of Gladstone, that "to serve Armenia is to serve civilization."